



MSD of Lawrence Township **EXCELLENCE** DESIGN CHALLENGE



2024-2025 Overview

Sponsored by: The Lawrence Township School Foundation

Purpose: To reward a staff member for an innovative idea that, if implemented, meaningfully impacts the MSDLT organization through efficiency, effectiveness, AND significant quantifiable improvements.

Eligibility: Any MSDLT non-administrative, staff member* that is employed as a certified or classified staff member by the MSD of Lawrence Township at the time of submission. The idea AND submission must be from an MSDLT staff member.

**Continued employment with MSDLT for at least 24 months if awarded the \$20,000 or the money must be refunded. See Excellence Design Challenge Agreement for specifics.*

How it works:

1. A staff member(s) may complete the “planning application” which will indicate an interest in the Design Challenge and provide a summary of the idea. This will be an electronic submission.
2. The MSDLT Excellence Design Challenge Team (MEDCT) will review the planning applications and determine which ones meet the requirements to move to the “Research and Development” (R and D) phase to complete the “full application”. The applicants who move to the R and D phase, who will be called “finalists”, will be notified by email with more information about the full application.
3. The finalists will need to complete their R and D phase on the proposal outside of the contract day. A progress report will be due to the committee midway through this phase. A fully completed application package must be submitted by the deadline in order for the R and D phase award to be presented. The applicant is not implementing the idea during the R and D phase– the applicant is creating the action plan for the implementation of the idea.
4. Full applications will then be reviewed by MEDCT members, and the winner (or winners) will be determined. Dr. Smith will be the final vote in the process. Finalists as well as the winner (winners) will be announced at the End of the Year Celebration for all staff members. If the Superintendent does not deem any of the applications meet the qualifications of champion, the district reserves the right to not make a monetary award.

Requirements:

- The idea must be unique to the individual or to the school district. It cannot be a pre-packaged program or implementation of a copyrighted program. It cannot be a curriculum or published resource. It cannot be purchased software or web based product.
- The idea must impact a large part (a grade span such as elementary or a large division such as transportation) of the overall MSDLT system. Ideas for single school or classroom based ideas will not

be accepted.

- Applications may be submitted by more than one employee, but all involved must be identified at the beginning of the planning application process. Monetary awards are shared by the number of applicants.
- Only one application should be submitted per idea.

Timeline:

Friday, December 6, 2024	Release of information about 24-25 Design Challenge
Tuesday, December 10, 2024	Planning Application available online - go to www.itschools.org
Friday, January 3, 2025	Planning Application due (must submit electronically by midnight)
Friday, January 31, 2025	Planning Application Finalists notified via email
Friday, January 31 – April 4	Research and Development Phase for Finalists – completion of application package
Friday, April 4, 2025	Full Applications due / R and D Monetary Awards Presented to Finalists (\$750 per application; will be divided if more than one applicant)
Friday, May 23, 2025	MSDLT Excellence Design Challenge Winner(s) Announced at Teacher of the Year Celebration (\$20,000 total award; will be divided if more than one idea is selected; will be divided if more than one certified staff member contributed to final application)

Upfront Costs:

IMPORTANT: The planning application will ask each applicant to clearly outline the MSDLT projected upfront and ongoing costs (if any) of the idea. Finalists will need to include a cost benefit analysis; identify what cost savings will occur if there are upfront or ongoing costs to the district. This contest is to identify innovative solutions to improve the system without incurring additional expenses. This portion of the application is crucial and should be considered at length before submission.

Additional Information:

- The MSD of Lawrence Township is a large business dependent on the efficiency and effectiveness of many systems. Although the primary focus is on teaching and learning, applicants should consider the operation of all systems within the district when developing ideas.
- The MSD of Lawrence Township, at the central office, has several divisions with leaders and teams working on improving efficiency and effectiveness in their areas. If an idea is presented by an applicant that is already being considered and reviewed by a division, it will not move to the R and D phase of the Design Challenge.
- Any idea that is fully researched, designed, and submitted through the R and D phase can and may be implemented by the MSDLT even if it is not an award winner.
- All applicants must inform their principal of their intention to enter the Challenge before submitting the planning application.
- Time allocated to work on the R and D phase of the idea must be completed outside of the contract day.

Awards: Monetary Awards may be granted at two times during the Design Challenge

1. Research and Development (R and D) award. This is awarded to finalists (planning applicants chosen by the MSDLT Excellence Design Challenge Team) who complete the progress report and submit the full application. This award is \$750 and will be paid after the successful submission of the final application package. If more than one staff member contributed to the submission of one application, the award will be divided equally.
2. MSDLT Excellence Design Challenge Champion. This is awarded to the champion idea that is announced at the End of the Year Teacher Celebration. This award is \$20,000 and will be paid out after the announcement of the champion. If more than one staff member contributed to the submission of one application, the award will be divided equally.